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WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

Colombia: A New President and a New Political Spectrum

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SECRET**COLOMBIA: A NEW PRESIDENT AND A NEW POLITICAL SPECTRUM**

Misael Pastrana Borrero will be inaugurated on 7 August as the fourth and last president under Colombia's unique National Front system of government. The Front was established in 1957 following the overthrow of General Rojas Pinilla and was designed to end the bloody political strife that had wracked the nation for ten years. The major provision of the Front was for the Liberal and Conservative parties to alternate the presidency and to retain parity in Congress between them until 1974.* Last April's election did not evolve as the Front's founders envisioned. There was widespread opposition within the Conservative Party—whose turn it was to provide a president—to the imposition of Pastrana as the official candidate by Conservative former president Ospina. Another factor affecting his candidacy was his close identification with Liberal President Carlos Lleras. As a consequence, two other Conservatives, Belisario Betancur and Evaristo Sourdís, joined the contest, thereby further splitting the Conservative Party. Former dictator Rojas Pinilla also ran as a nominal Conservative.



Rojas Pinilla's Daughter Being Evicted From First Session of Congress on 20 July

**Constitutional amendments passed in 1968 specify that parity at cabinet level and in other high positions will remain in effect until 1978.*

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Pastrana's small plurality—63,557 votes*—attests to the Front's narrow survival. The runner-up, Rojas Pinilla, would have overturned the Front and possibly plunged the nation into chaos and renewed strife reminiscent of that which caused his overthrow in 1957. Rojas' followers, led by his politically astute daughter, Senator Maria Eugenia Rojas de Moreno, and his political movement, the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO), have charged that Rojas has been denied the presidency through fraud and claim that he is the rightful president. Since 18 July, Mrs. Rojas de Moreno has made inflammatory statements emphasizing that her party does not recognize Pastrana's victory and predicting that "blood will flow in the streets." On 20 July, when the new Congress convened, she accused President Lleras of responsibility in the assassination attempt against activist ANAPO Senator Ignacio Vives.

To counter any possible violence, President Lleras declared a state of siege that remains in effect at this time. Even though there are extensive security precautions in Bogota, new violence could erupt during the inauguration. General Rojas Pinilla has been recuperating from a serious heart ailment in the United States, and it is doubtful that he will resume active leadership of the movement. He is, nevertheless, expected to return before 7 August and probably will hold private "inaugural ceremonies" in the hope of causing violence or at least embarrassing the new administration. The armed forces are capable of containing any disorders that may occur.

Although ANAPO-sponsored demonstrations would be embarrassing to the newly inaugurated President and serve to cloud the political atmosphere, they probably would be the least of Pastrana's problems.

The Setting

The elections on 19 April signaled the end of an era: the Liberal and Conservative parties are no longer pre-eminent, and a third party, the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO), has become a major contender on the political scene. Lower class voters, who had traditionally opted for one or the other of the major parties, instead succumbed to Rojas Pinilla's demagoguery, and many voted for him.

The election was a greater blow to the Liberals than to the Conservatives, who already knew that their party was fragmented. The Liberal Party complacently believed it had the support of

the majority of the electorate, particularly in the cities, and was certain that, whatever happened to Pastrana, it would continue to be the largest party in Colombia. Instead, voters in the larger cities and departmental capitals, where Liberalism had been strong, overwhelmingly supported Rojas. The leaders of both parties appear convinced that drastic changes are necessary in the internal structure and tactics of the parties comprising the National Front if they are successfully to meet the ANAPO challenge and regain their pre-eminence.

The loss of effectiveness by the Liberals and Conservatives, Rojas Pinilla's charisma, the excellent organization and campaign by ANAPO, and

*Pastrana—1,625,025; Rojas Pinilla—1,561,468; Betancur—471,350; Sourdis—336,286.

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A conservative who was handpicked by Liberal President Lleras to be his successor, Misael Pastrana Borrero has never held national elective office, but is an experienced technocrat. He was private secretary to President Mariano Ospina from 1948-50 and minister-counselor at the embassy in Washington from 1950-53. Appointed secretary general of the Foreign Ministry in 1953, he did not support Rojas Pinilla when he came to power in that year and consequently lost his job. Pastrana was a member of the Permanent Delegation to the United Nations (1953); general manager of Colombia's agricultural credit fund in New York (1953-55); manager, legal counsel and vice president of the Corporacion Financiera (1955-59); and president of Celanese Colombiana (1965-66).

He entered the cabinet in 1959 and served briefly as minister of development (1959), minister of public works (1960-61), and minister of finance (1961). In the latter post he compiled a record favoring free enterprise and a free economy. In March 1966 he was defeated in the congressional elections in his bid as a senatorial candidate from the Department of Huila. He was, however, successful in obtaining a seat on the Bogota city council. The same year he was a principal member of former president Alberto Lleras Camargo's National Bipartisan Committee. Before his appointment as ambassador to the United States in November 1968, Pastrana served as minister of government, a position he had held since President Carlos Lleras formed his cabinet in 1966. During his tenure as minister of government, Pastrana worked diligently to obtain passage of the controversial constitutional reform bill.

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25X6 the protest against the "establishment" as represented by the National Front, all contributed to the Front's near defeat. Pastrana's poor tactics contributed to his poor showing.

As a result, the two major parties are seriously factionalized and political alignments will not be clear until after Pastrana takes office. The outcome could be determined for the most part by the course that ANAPO chooses to follow and whether the party can hold together when Rojas Pinilla is no longer politically active. He is now 70 years old

ANAPO must decide who will succeed to the leadership of the party and who will be the presidential candidate in 1974. At the same time, the process of uniting the movement into a fully operational third party is not an easy task, and it could lead to the splintering of the heterogeneous forces comprising ANAPO.

Whether the ANAPO bloc in Congress will remain united is debatable; individual members now may be more willing than before to follow a course of action that will benefit them personally. ANAPO is expected to organize itself into a strong opposition in Congress. In that case it

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Supporters of ex-dictator Rojas Pinilla demonstrating in downtown Bogota the day following the 1970 presidential elections.

would be in an excellent position to harass the new administration and solidify support for itself by posing as the real defender of the people against the oligarchy. Outside Congress, ANAPO will be able to organize demonstrations against the government, incite dissident groups to oppose the administration, and act as a rallying point for the forces in Colombian society that are seeking a mass-based political movement capable of being the real opposition to the "establishment."

Pastrana's Problems

President-elect Pastrana faces great domestic difficulties when he takes office on 7 August. Although his victory was legitimate, his plurality was slim and many persons believe he was elected by fraud. This situation will deprive him of true public acceptance and recognition of his legitimacy. He will not only be considered president of a minority in the country as a whole, but he also

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will lead a minority in his own fragmented Conservative Party. Even the Liberal Party, where he has his strongest support, is expected to factionalize further as the realities of the competitive political situation for 1974 begin to emerge more clearly. Pastrana will have to utilize all the powers of his office in a forceful manner if he is to establish himself as president in fact as well as in name.

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Pastrana lacks definable political support. He will have to develop rapidly some kind of political machinery on which he can depend during the next four years.

The decisions that will be made by defeated Conservative candidates Betancur and Sourdis will be important to Pastrana's power base. Betancur has publicly stated that he will not oppose Pastrana merely for the sake of opposition, but evidence suggests that he intends to adopt a hard line toward the new administration. Sourdis has not yet made a firm decision: much will depend on what he is able to obtain in the way of government posts from the Pastrana administration and whether the individuals under his banner remain united. Some members of both camps probably will collaborate with Pastrana even though Betancur and Sourdis remain in opposition. Support from individual defectors may give the Pastrana forces a majority in Congress. In any event, ANAPO has more than one third of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies and can block any legislation requiring a two-thirds vote.

SENATE				
	Liberals	Liberal Independent	Conservatives	TOTAL
Pastrana	37	2	18	57
Rojas	12		26	38
Betancur	3		9	12
Sourdis	5		6	11
				118
CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES				
Pastrana	59	4	31	94
Rojas	28		44	72
Betancur	6		18	24
Sourdis	8		12	20
				210
<i>Pastrana lacks three votes in 118-member Senate to achieve 50% plus one. In 210-member chamber he lacks 12 votes for 50% plus one.</i>				

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Pastrana's relations with the armed forces are important for the stability of the government and the maintenance of public order. He has military support at present but he cannot afford to be complacent. Pastrana will have to be decisive; his greatest danger would come from showing uncertainty in the face of a political, security, or economic crisis. Although the Colombian military traditionally has been apolitical, it still considers itself the ultimate defender of the state and the constitution. It probably would act in the face of an imminent threat of chaos or anarchy.

Colombia's rapid rate of urbanization is out-running the capacity of industry to absorb migrants and the young coming into the labor market, and the ability of government to supply desired public services. The new administration must satisfy, or give the appearance of satisfying, the aspirations of those who consider themselves suppressed, deprived, or alienated.

In this sense Pastrana probably will be at a disadvantage as the heir of the "establishment" against which the protest vote was in part directed. The new government will have to decide the extent to which it will sacrifice economic goals for the sake of political expediency, in its efforts to gain support among the masses. Pastrana probably will not be able to continue the remarkable progress made toward economic recovery and the restructuring of the government undertaken by President Lleras.

The Prospects

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Pastrana

possesses several important assets. He will inherit an improved economy from President Lleras, who probably will support him, at least initially, to ensure that the programs he began are continued. Although Pastrana cannot count on a clear and independent majority in Congress, he will be able to dispense patronage to those who support him. Properly

used, this could be the most important factor in his favor. In addition, the current high price of coffee and its positive effect on the economy will reflect favorably on the President-elect.

Pastrana has made a point of meeting with representatives of lower income groups to discuss their problems since the election. He has called for cooperation from followers of the other candidates in a way that suggests that this is not merely an empty gesture but a genuine effort to gain favor with those individuals whose desire has been to support a program of social change. He has made public statements on the need for social change to include action in the fields of employment, housing, health, education, and urban problems.

Pastrana will be compelled to develop programs, some of them already under way, to reduce unemployment and improve the standard of living if he hopes to create mass support for his administration. There is a danger, however, that the government will overreact to the ANAPO threat and initiate or acquiesce in unwise measures and programs that could undermine the economic and thus the political stability of the country. Pastrana's reaction to problems that come to the fore soon will give a clue as to the nature and possibly the success or failure of his administration. His initial tests will come when he chooses his ministers and senior officials and seeks to implement legislation. At that time, because of his lack of a majority in Congress, he will have to present an attractive program that will receive such broad public support that members of the Congress will be forced to follow him. Should he be unable to rule with a hostile Congress, however, Pastrana can call on a time-tested Colombian solution—he can declare a state of siege and rule by decree.

All the evidence thus far suggests that there will be few surprises after Pastrana takes office, but Colombia's progress during the next four years probably will be slower than that under President Lleras.

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